



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



Decision Record for Approved Western Colorado Desert Routes of Travel Designations

An amendment to the California Desert Conservation Area Plan 1980

Prepared by
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
California Desert District Office

Linda Hansen

Mar 31 2003

Linda Hansen
Recommended
Bureau of Land Management
District Manager, California Desert

Date

Mike Pool 3/31/03

Mike Pool
Approved
Bureau of Land Management
State Director, California

Date

DECISION RECORD
for the
APPROVED CDCA PLAN AMENDMENT
And
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
for
WESTERN COLORADO DESERT ROUTES OF TRAVEL DESIGNATIONS

Environmental Assessment Number CA-670-EA2002-2

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
California State Office
California Desert District
El Centro Field Office
Imperial County, California

BACKGROUND

The Western Colorado Desert (WECO) is located in Imperial County in southern California and offers outstanding recreational opportunities for off-highway vehicle (OHV) touring in the California Desert District. BLM manages OHV use, so that the conditions of special status species, and other natural and cultural resources are maintained or improved. The type and level of OHV use also is managed to create an environment that promotes the health and safety of visitors and employees, and alleviates conflict between nearby residents and recreational users.

The approved plan amendment to the California Desert Conservation Area Plan amends previous route designations and existing routes in approximately 475,000 acres of off-road vehicle limited areas. The Back Country Discovery Route and the De Anza National Historic Trail are identified in the approved plan amendment. These two route systems are programs of the State of California and the National Park Service developed to promote touring of the historical area and they provide interpretative information for the route networks. Numerous important historical sites and habitat for several sensitive or endangered animal species are present in the area. Several previous OHV designations have been made for portions of the project area. The last comprehensive review and Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed in 1997. However, the route designation process for the 1997 review was not completed.

Since the 1997 review and EA, several regulatory changes have taken place that relate to the Western Colorado Desert. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed the Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep as an endangered population. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had proposed the flat-tailed horned lizard as a Federal threatened species. On January 3, 2003, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service withdrew this proposal, due in part, to a conservation agreement between various government agencies, including BLM. The negotiated settlement to the Center for Biological Diversity's (CBD) lawsuit against BLM,

in part, agreed to complete updating routes of travel designations in the Western Colorado Desert by January 31, 2003. These changes and the increased interest in OHV recreation in southern California have resulted in a need to revisit and finalize route designations in the Western Colorado Desert.

The Western Colorado Desert Routes of Travel Designations plan amendment and EA establishes site-specific route designations based in the California Desert Conservation Area Plan and Environmental Impact Statement of 1980. As such, it is tiered to the original plan and Environmental Impact Statement.

DECISION

This Decision Record (DR) approves, with minor modifications, the proposed Western Colorado Desert Routes of Travel Designations (WECO) Plan, an amendment of the 1980 Bureau of Land Management California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan to that portion that lies within the WECO planning area. The minor modifications from the proposed plan amendment include corrections relating to errors, update of information and changes to correct oversights.

1. The following are corrections to the table of route designations in the proposed plan amendment. Portions of these routes were identified with more than one designation in the route table that accompanied the proposed plan amendment. A portion of each of these routes was identified with a different designation than the remainder of the route. These corrections designate the route as it should have been designated based on the criteria of route designations for the proposed action in the proposed plan amendment. After further analysis, it was determined that the following corrections are prudent:
 - T670075: Designation of 450 feet of this route from limited in the proposed plan amendment to open in the DR. The total route length is 22 miles.
 - T670084: Designation of 305 feet of this route from limited in the proposed plan amendment to open in the DR. The total route length is 15 miles.
 - T670256: Designation of the entire route consisting of 2.36 miles from closed in the proposed plan amendment to open in the DR.
 - T670280: Designation of 50 feet of this route from limited in the proposed plan amendment to closed in the DR. The total route length is 900 feet.
 - T670319: Designation of 0.75 miles of this route from closed in the proposed plan amendment to limited in the DR. It actually is the same route as route T670387. The route will be identified as T670378 in the future. T670387 will retain the initial designation of limited. The total length of T670319 / T670387 is 1.35 miles.
 - T6700345: Designation of 2700 feet of this route from open in the proposed plan amendment to closed in the DR. The total route length is 1.5 miles.
 - T670398: Designation of 270 feet of this route from limited in the proposed plan amendment to closed in the DR. The total route length is 6 miles.

- T670419: Designation of the entire route consisting of 2.34 miles from closed in the proposed plan amendment to limited in the DR.
 - T670519: This 1.24 mile route should not have a BLM designation in the DR. This route is now entirely on private property. The proposed plan amendment designated portions of this route as open and closed.
 - Total corrections: 7.4 miles of routes out of a route network with 1116 miles open, 922 miles closed and 279 miles limited. This changes 755 feet (0.14 miles) from limited to open. This changes 320 feet (0.06 miles) from limited to closed. This changes 2700 feet (0.51 miles) from open to closed. This changes 1.24 miles from open/closed to undesignated. This changes 2.36 miles from closed to open. This changes 3.09 miles from closed to limited.
2. Correction is made to the routes located south of the All American Canal and generally east of the southern end of the East Highland Canal and the western end of the Coachella Canal and extends south to the U.S.-Mexico border. The routes in this area were identified as open in the draft and proposed plan amendments. They occur on public lands withdrawn to the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). This decision record does not formally designate these routes. BOR manages these routes and currently limits access to administrative use. These routes are: T670511, south of the All American Canal, T670538, south of the All American Canal, T607458, T670476, T670505, T670508, T670509, T670475, T670512, and T670477.
 3. The State of California is in the process of establishing the Back Country Discovery Route. This is a series of routes that could be used by recreational users as touring routes. The newest route system identified proposes routes that were not included as part of the Back Country Discovery Route in either the draft or the proposed plan amendment. This DR updates the Back Country Discovery Route identified in the proposed plan amendment to become consistent with the proposal by the State. All of the WECO routes being added to the Back Country Discovery Route by this DR were already designated as open, but not as a part of the Back Country Discovery Route. The following changes update the route network to include the following routes in the Back Country Discovery Route:

Alternate Back Country Discovery Route Superstition Hills Loop would start in the Plaster City Open Area and head north along T670342 to route T670341 to the Superstition Open area near the No Camping Area. After crossing the open area to the north side the route would continue north on route T670194 around the west end of the Superstition Hills to T670084 Kane Springs Road. The route would follow T670084 west along the south side of San Sebastian Marsh to T670191 De Anza National Historic Trail. Then north on T670191 to T670183 Tarantula Wash and north west on T670183 to Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Area.
 4. In designating camping areas in the Yuha Basin area, the draft plan and proposed plan amendment did not allow for overnight parking of vehicles, except at the designated camping areas. This could create a difficulty for recreational users of the wilderness areas that desire to camp in the wilderness overnight. This DR corrects this oversight. Overnight parking of unoccupied vehicles within 35 feet from the centerline of an open or limited route adjacent to the wilderness areas is allowed in the Yuha Basin area. However, these areas are only for parking of

unoccupied vehicles, no camping in these areas will be allowed.

This plan was prepared under the regulations implementing the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA). An Environmental Assessment was prepared for the WECO Plan in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. The proposed plan amendment was published December 13, 2002 and is available on BLM's website at <http://www.ca.blm.gov>. A summary of the primary plan amendment decisions of WECO includes:

Designation of open, limited and closed routes as shown on the proposed plan amendment map and described in the proposed action in the Environmental Assessment and draft plan amendment with the changes identified in the errata sheet for the proposed plan amendment and this DR. See Attachment 1 for a complete list of the designation of each route in the WECO project area.

Designation of camping and parking areas as shown on the proposed plan amendment map and described in the proposed action in the Environmental Assessment and draft plan amendment with the changes identified in the errata sheet for the proposed plan amendment and this DR. See Attachment 2 for a description of camping opportunities.

Increased law enforcement.

Providing signing of routes, public education and information.

Rehabilitation of some routes that are not designated as open or limited use and are not used under another form of a land use agreement such as a permit for access to privately owned land.

Development and implementation of a final dust control plan, as required by Imperial County Air Pollution Control Board.

Overnight parking, but not camping, within 35 feet of the centerline of a route that is designated as limited or open and that is located near wilderness area trailheads in the Yuha Basin area. This will support overnight camping within the wilderness.

Included with the approved plan amendment are certain site-specific conservation measures. While these measures are addressed and approved in the approved plan amendment, they are not authorized until specifically proposed and addressed through additional site-specific NEPA analyses.

All of the interim measures identified in the Consent Decree in Center for Biological Diversity, et al. v. BLM (C-00-0927 WHA (JCS)) and subject to expiration upon the signing of the DR for the WECO planning area, are terminated.

CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER CDCA PLAN AMENDMENTS

Several other CDCA plan amendments are concurrently being developed for other regions in the CDCA. Those decisions that are common among these amendments have been developed to be consistent with each other.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

The alternatives considered in detail in the Environmental Assessment included the proposed action (which is the proposed plan amendment and the approved plan amendment), the No Action Alternative, Alternative 1, and Alternative 2.

- The approved plan amendment creates a route network that balances the need to conserve natural and cultural resources while providing for off highway vehicle recreation opportunities and other access needs throughout the project area. In the Yuha Basin area, it provides for camping in designated camping areas and designates the routes of travel as limited use, with the limitation to street legal vehicles for most of the routes. The approved plan amendment also designates a seasonal limitation on routes in some Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep habitat. The approved plan amendment allows camping within various widths from designated routes.
- The No Action Alternative is the route network that previously existed on the ground. It will allow many routes that exist on the ground, but are not designated to remain undesignated. It allows camping within various widths from designated routes.
- Alternative 1 is more environmentally conservative than the other alternatives. It allows very limited use of the Yuha Basin area, with only a few routes designated as open. It also allows camping only in designated areas throughout the project area. Overall, there are fewer routes available for use in this alternative. This alternative is identified as the environmentally preferable alternative in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act because it allows less surface disturbance than the other alternatives.
- Alternative 2 is more motorized recreation oriented than the other alternatives. It designates more open routes and allows greater camping opportunities.

A complete description of the alternatives analyzed in detail is contained in the EA and the set of maps in the draft and proposed plan amendment.

RATIONALE FOR THE DECISION:

Considering the agency purpose and need, public comments, the content of the EA, and supporting project records, I have decided to implement the approved plan amendment. The route designations and camping opportunities in the approved plan amendment are specifically identified in the attached list. My rationale for this decision follows:

1) The approved plan amendment strives for a balance between continuing to provide opportunities for vehicle access, off highway vehicle touring and protecting cultural and wildlife resources. The approved plan amendment balances Alternative 1's emphasis on natural and cultural resource protections and Alternative 2's emphasis on motorized recreation. The existing camping restrictions are maintained and reduced to a 50-foot centerline width in flat-tailed horned lizard management areas outside the Yuha Basin area. The management area in the Yuha Basin area contains limitations because of the heavy impacts that this area has received in the past and that continue to occur; the presence of sensitive species and historical sites; and the focused public interest on the area. Only street legal vehicles would be allowed in the Yuha Basin area, except for the routes that are identified as part of the Back Country Discovery Route or De Anza National Historic Trail. The route network within the Yuha Basin area

was designed to provide access to rock collecting locations and to the areas of historic interest. Camping would only be allowed at designated sites within the Yuha Basin area. Overnight parking of unoccupied vehicles within 35 feet from the centerline of an open or limited route adjacent to the wilderness areas is allowed in the Yuha Basin area. Daylight parking of vehicles along any route designated as open or limited is allowed. The parking allowances were developed to promote use of the wilderness for camping and other recreational activities and to promote other recreational activities within the Yuha Basin area such as rock collecting, hiking, horseback riding, and photography. BLM believes that the approved plan amendment provides the best balance for the multiple use management for this area.

2) The Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep population is listed as an endangered population. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service designated critical habitat extends from the mountain base in the western portion of the project area west into San Diego County. The Recovery Plan for the Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep imposes a seasonal closure (January through June) for off highway vehicle routes of travel in the Coyote Mountains specifically for the protection of this population. BLM believes that seasonal limitation of the use of routes in this area during breeding and lambing adds to the conservation efforts for the sheep. The seasonal closure maintained under the approved plan amendment is consistent with the recovery plan for this species. See the Biological Opinion from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service for more information on this species.

3) The flat-tailed horned lizard had been re-proposed as a threatened species. On January 3, 2003 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service withdrew the proposed listing. The withdrawal of the listing does not have a significant affect on WECO project area. This is because the BLM entered into a conservation agreement for this species in 1997. BLM is committed to implementing this conservation agreement.

Most of the project area is within flat-tailed horned lizard habitat. Through the 1997 conservation agreement, several lizard management areas (East Mesa, West Mesa, and the Yuha Basin area) were created within the WECO project area. Special restrictions on use apply to management areas. The strategy specifically called for using an interdisciplinary team to reduce the number of open off highway vehicle routes of travel and to restrict vehicle camping and parking to within a 50-foot center line width for routes within the management areas. The approved plan amendment supports the flat-tailed horned lizard rangewide management strategy.

4) The desert pupfish is limited to the small surface waters found within the San Sebastian Marsh/ San Felipe Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Within the ACEC, the historic Kane Springs Road is the south boundary of an area closed to off highway vehicles. Allowing use of the Kane Springs Road with a no camping designation would maintain off highway vehicle use of the routes but would help to prevent vehicle play associated with camping from intruding into the sensitive area and damaging natural and cultural resources that are immediately adjacent to the route. The area is also a National Natural Landmark established to preserve the riparian habitat. See the Biological Opinion from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service for more information on this species.

5) The approved plan amendment provides for the conservation of the limited riparian habitat in the project area found adjacent to the All American Canal and San Felipe Creek for the Federal listed Yuma clapper rail, the southwestern willow flycatcher, and the least Bell's vireo and the California listed California black rail, as well as the Federal listed arroyo toad found in a few sand washes in the western portion of the project area. See the Biological Opinion from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service for more information on this species.

6) The approved plan amendment supports designating the Back Country Discovery Route and the De Anza National Historic Trail.

7) The approved plan amendment provides vehicle access to points of interest within the Yuha Basin area such as the De Anza historical marker, Yuha geoglyphs, Yuha well, and Yuha shell beds.

8) The approved plan amendment provides vehicle access for recreational rock collectors to Fossil Canyon, Painted Gorge, Yuha Well, geoglyphs, shell beds, Mount Signal and the Superstition Hills.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:

The Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1501.7) and BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610) require an early and open process (scoping) for determining the planning issues. The regulations also require that agencies provide opportunities for public involvement in the planning process, including review of the planning criteria and the Draft Plan/EA, as appropriate. Efforts have been made to make the public aware of the planning process and of opportunities for involvement.

For the scoping phase, over 6500 project announcements were mailed to interested parties. Notice was published in the Federal Register on March 25, 2002 and started a public comment period, which was extended to include a 68-day period. The notice of the intent to prepare a plan amendment was also announced on the El Centro Field Office's Web Page, through press releases and through briefings to the California Desert District Advisory Council meetings. Two public meetings were held. Thirty-two individuals commented during this scoping period by letter, e-mail, and/or testimony at a public meeting. Attendance at the public meetings was 16 people in El Centro and 14 people in San Diego. Based upon responses, the mailing list was been updated to approximately 150 interested individuals.

After the draft documents were prepared, BLM provided a copy to all of the project participants and encouraged their continued participation in the development of the final documents. A draft plan amendment and Environmental Assessment was distributed in October 2002. A Notice of Availability was published in the Federal Register on October 18, 2002. The notice of availability of a draft plan amendment was also announced on the El Centro Field Office's Web Page, through press releases and through briefings to the California Desert District Advisory Council Meetings. Again, BLM held public meetings in both Imperial County and San Diego in November 2002. BLM accepted oral, written and e-mail comments.

Recently, BLM made the proposed plan amendment available to the public. This was announced in a Federal Register Notice on December 13, 2002. Seven timely letters that contained protest issues and concerns were submitted to BLM. These protest letters were used to further improve the proposed plan amendment. However, the BLM Director has dismissed all the protests to the WECO Plan. By regulation (43 CFR 1610.5-2) the decision of the Director on the plan protests is the final decision of the Department of the Interior.

Agency Coordination

BLM has consulted with a number of entities on this project in general, and on specific off highway vehicle route designations in particular. Some of these entities include Imperial County, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Parks and

Recreation, U. S. Border Patrol, State Historic Preservation Office and tribal councils with interest in the project area. The Imperial County Supervisors support as few route closures as possible. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued a Biological Opinion for the approved plan amendment. California Department of Parks and Recreation identified specific route changes to promote compatibility with the State Park OHV Recreation Area. The U.S. Border Patrol discussed designations for specific routes that would assist them in their mission. The Cahuilla, Kumeyaay, and Quechan tribal councils expressed concern about vehicle-related recreation use impacting Native American historical sites and values. In addition, this project was discussed with members of environmental groups and with recreational users that enjoy off highway vehicle use, hiking, camping, horseback riding, rock collecting, hunting and backpacking.

Consistency Requirements

In accordance with BLM resource management planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.3-2) BLM must identify any known inconsistencies with State or local plans, policies, or programs. BLM must also provide the Governor with up to 60 days in which to identify any inconsistencies and submit recommendations. No known inconsistencies have been identified, either by BLM or the Governor, for the WECO plan.

PLAN MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

BLM will conduct monitoring in the WECO plan area based on the Flat Tailed Horned Lizard Strategy, which is incorporated by reference and based on visitor use. This strategy has been used by BLM in the project area for several years. Since the flat tailed horned lizard is a sensitive species that is present throughout much of the project area, it can be used as an indicator species to monitor the condition of the project area. The flat tailed horned lizard monitoring program also monitors the percent of the area that is covered with vehicle tracks. This information can be used to assess the condition of the project area as well as the compliance with the route designations and need for rehabilitation of a specific area.

The processes of monitoring, evaluation and adaptive management share the goal of improving effectiveness and permitting dynamic responses to increased knowledge and a changing landscape. The process itself will not remain static and will be periodically evaluated to ascertain if the monitoring questions and standards are still relevant, and the program would be adjusted as appropriate. Some field monitoring items may be discontinued and others added as knowledge and issues change.

MITIGATION MEASURES:

Mitigation measures were incorporated within the approved plan amendment. The designation of routes and the development of camping opportunities in the approved plan amendment gave great consideration for the conservation of natural and cultural resources while providing considerable recreational opportunities. All practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm by the plan have been adopted.

In coordination with Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD), in the future a dust control plan will be developed for air resources. Currently Rule 800 Fugitive Dust Control Requirements for Control of Fine Particulate Matter (PM-10) as approved by the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District includes exempt activities under section E. Exemption E.9 states “The recreational use of public lands, including but not limited to Off Highway Vehicles, all-terrain vehicles,

trucks, cars, motorcycles, motorbikes or motorbuggies.” This exempts the project area from Rule 800. However, ICAPCD has informed BLM of its intent to update their PM10 State Implementation Plan (SIP). It is anticipated that the updated SIP will require BLM to develop and implement a dust control plan for the land that it manages in Imperial County.

CONTACT PERSON:

For additional information concerning this decision or the BLM administrative review process contact Lynnette Elser, El Centro Field Office, 1661 S. 4th Street, El Centro, CA. 92243; telephone (760) 337-4400

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

During the public scoping for this project, many members of the public requested that BLM prepare an Environmental Impact Statement rather than an Environmental Assessment. BLM decided to continue with the preparation of the Environmental Assessment, but on a more detailed and expanded level than is typically written. An expanded Environmental Assessment was initially chosen over an Environmental Impact Statement because it is believed that significant negative impacts, if any, associated from the project could be mitigated.

After complete review of the scoping comments, potential impacts identified in the Environmental Assessment and draft plan amendment, the public comments on the draft plan amendment and Environmental Assessment, the proposed plan amendment, the protest letters, and comments from other agencies and groups received during coordination and consultation, BLM once again considered the need for an Environmental Impact Statement.

Based upon review of the Environmental Assessment and supporting project record, I have determined that the approved plan amendment is not a major Federal action and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. No environmental effects meet the definition of significance in context or intensity as defined in 40 CFR 1508.27. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not needed. This finding is based on the following discussion:

Context: The project area falls within habitat for the federal listed desert pupfish, Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep, Yuma clapper rail, the southwestern willow flycatcher, and the least Bell’s vireo and the California listed California black rail. The Federal listed arroyo toad is found in a few sand washes in the western portion of the project area. The project area also falls within habitat for the flat-tailed horned lizard. The discussion of significance criteria that follows applies to the intended action and is within the context of local importance. The Environmental Assessment and proposed and approved plan amendment details the effects of the project. None of the effects identified including direct, indirect and cumulative effects, are considered to be significant.

Intensity: The following discussion is organized around the Ten Significance Criteria described in 40 CFR 1508.27.

1) Impacts may be both beneficial and adverse.

Due to the design features of the approved plan amendment, the predictive effects would include increased habitat and habitat protection for the flat tailed horned lizard, increased protection for the

Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep, desert pupfish, habitat for the federal listed Yuma clapper rail, the southwestern willow flycatcher, and the least Bell's vireo and the California listed California black rail compared to the current conditions. Increased protection for cultural and archeological resources is predicted as well. The approved plan amendment should reduce the air emissions compared to the current conditions. The rehabilitation of routes that are designated as closed and routes that should not be present will result in less air emissions due to wind erosion, more habitat and species protection and better conservation of cultural resources. Some adverse impacts are predicted however, of the alternatives, the approved plan amendment provides the best balance between the recreational use and conservation of natural and environmental resources and provides substantially fewer and less intense impacts compared to the current conditions. Details concerning the effects of the approved plan amendment are included in the Environmental Assessment and proposed and approved plan amendment.

2) The degree to which the selected alternative will affect public health or safety.

Public health and safety were identified as an issue. The approved plan amendment is comparable to other route designation projects that have occurred within the California Desert District. Off highway vehicle use is a high-risk recreational activity. Some risk is a part of this activity. Locations of past accident and other safety factors were considered in developing the alternatives and choosing the approved plan amendment. BLM law enforcement reviewed the route network for each alternative in the WECO project. They did not identify any specific area as having a significant accident rate or safety concern.

3) Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farm lands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

There are unique cultural and archeological sites within the project area. The approved plan amendment provides for increased conservation of these areas, while allowing recreational use of the project area. There are ecologically critical areas and wetlands within the project area and the approved plan amendment provides increased conservation of these areas. There are no park lands, prime farm lands, and wild and scenic rivers within the project area.

4) The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

The effects of the approved plan amendment on the quality of the human environment were addressed in the Environmental Assessment. Although there are effects that are clearly identified, the mitigation for the approved plan amendment greatly offsets these effects. In addition, the effects for the approved plan amendment are fewer and have lower intensity than the current conditions.

5) The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

The approved plan amendment is not unique or unusual. The BLM has experience developing similar plans for routes of travel in similar areas and has found effects to be reasonably predictable. The environmental effects to the human environment were analyzed in the Environmental Assessment and proposed and approved plan amendment. There are no predicted effects on the human environment, which are considered to be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

6) The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

The approved plan amendment does not set a precedent for future actions that may have significant effects, nor does it represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. The approved plan

amendment establishes a designated route system needed by the BLM for resource management within the El Centro resource area. Any future projects will be evaluated through the National Environmental Policy Act process and will stand on their own as to environmental effects.

7) Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.

The approved plan amendment was evaluated in the context of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions. These cumulative effects are identified in the Environmental Assessment. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted.

8) The degree to which the action may adversely affect the districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources.

The approved plan amendment will not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor will the approved plan amendment cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources. The cultural resource mitigation requirements were developed within the route designation and camping opportunity criteria of the “proposed action” in the Environmental Assessment and proposed and approved plan amendment. These mitigation efforts will help in the conservation of cultural resources.

9) The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

BLM consulted with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in regards to the Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep, Yuma clapper rail, the southwestern willow flycatcher, the least Bell’s vireo, arroyo toad, and desert pupfish. The approved plan amendment was specifically designed to conserve these species by limiting the type of vehicle in the Yuha Basin area, seasonally limiting use in the Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep, limiting the camping to specific areas in the Yuha Basin area, the rehabilitation of impacted areas, not allowing camping along Kane Springs Road, increased law enforcement, clear signing of routes and public education and information.

10) Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

The approved plan amendment does not violate any known Federal, State, or local law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. The Environmental Assessment and supporting project record contain discussions pertaining to the Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, and Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice). State, local, and tribal interests were consulted during the environmental analysis process. Furthermore, the approved plan amendment is consistent with applicable land management plans, policies, and programs.

Attachment 1

Table of Open, Limited, and Closed Routes WECO Approved Plan Amendment

Approved plan amendment route designations of OHV limited areas. If portions of routes fall under more than one category they will appear in more than one column.

Open Routes	Limited Routes	Closed routes
T670061	T670121	T670247
T670062	T670122	T670248
T670063	T670123	T670250
T670064	T670124	T670254
T670066	T670125	T670257
T670067	T670126	T670258
T670068	T670128	T670260
T670069	T670129	T670262
T670070	T670130	T670264
T670071	T670203	T670267
T670072	T670214	T670271
T670073	T670243	T670276
T670074	T670247	T670280
T670075	T670253	T670281
T670077	T670258	T670292
T670078	T670259	T670295
T670080	T670260	T670296
T670081	T670264	T670302
T670082	T670265	T670305
T670083	T670266	T670307
T670084	T670267	T670309
T670085	T670268	T670314
T670087	T670269	T670315
T670088	T670270	T670316
T670089	T670272	T670317
T670091	T670273	T670345
T670093	T670274	T670347
T670094	T670275	T670353
T670096	T670277	T670354
T670097	T670278	T670359
T670098	T670279	T670360
T670099	T670282	T670365
T670101	T670283	T670371
T670102	T670284	T670378
T670103	T670285	T670380
T670104	T670286	T670381
T670105	T670287	T670382
T670107	T670288	T670383
T670108	T670289	T670384

T670109	T670290	T670386
T670110	T670291	T670388
T670111	T670293	T670390
T670113	T670294	T670392
T670114	T670297	T670393
T670115	T670298	T670394
T670116	T670299	T670398
T670117	T670300	T670399
T670118	T670301	T670410
T670119	T670303	T670411
T670120	T670306	T670458
T670121	T670307	T670475
T670130	T670309	T670476
T670132	T670311	T670477
T670133	T670312	T670505
T670134	T670313	T670508
T560135	T670318	T670509
T670136	T670344	T670511
T670137	T670346	T670512
T670139	T670352	T670538
T670140	T670353	NCC014
T670141	T670354	NCC015
T670143	T670357	NCC016
T670144	T670358	NCC017
T670145	T670359	NCC019
T670146	T670362	NCC020
T670147	T670369	NCC021
T670149	T670373	NCC022
T670150	T670377	NCC023
T670152	T670379	NCC024
T560153	T670382	NCC025
T670155	T670385	NCC026
T670156	T670387	NCC027
T670157	T670389	NCC028
T670158	T670390	NCC029
T670159	T670391	NCC030
T670160	T670393	NCC033
T670161	T670395	NCC034
T670162	T670396	NCC037
T670163	T670397	NCC038
T670164	T670400	NCC040
T670165	T670401	NCC042
T670166	T670402	NCC043
T670167	T670403	NCC045
T670169	T670405	NCC046
T670170	T670406	NCC047

T670171	T670407	NCC048
T670172	T670408	NCC049
T670173	T670409	NCC050
T670174	T670410	NCC051
T670175	T670418	NCC055
T670176	T670419	NCC058
T670177	T670420	NCC059
T670178	T670421	NCC060
T670179	T670422	NCC061
T670180	T670423	NCC063
T670182	T670424	NCC064
T670183	T670425	NCC065
T670184	T670426	NCC067
T670186	T670427	NCC068
T670187	T670428	NCC069
T670190	T670429	NCC070
T670191	T670430	NCC071
T670192	T670443	NCC072
T670193		NCC072
T670194		NCC074
T670195		NCC075
T670196		MCC076
T670197		NCC077
T670198		NCC078
T670199		NCC079
T670200		NCC080
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T670208		NCC089
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T670264		NCC140
T670272		NCC141
T670274		NCC142
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T670331		NCC171
T670332		NCC186
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Explanation for Trails Having More Than One Type of Designation

T670121: portions within Coyote Mountains are limited to no vehicle use January 1-June 30. This designation assists with Peninsular bighorn sheep management.

T670130: portions within Coyote Mountains are limited to no vehicle use January 1-June 30. This designation assists with Peninsular bighorn sheep management.

T670203: portions within bombing range are limited to permitted race events.

T670243: portions within the Yuha Basin area are limited to street legal vehicles only.

T670247: portions within the Yuha Basin area are limited to street legal vehicles only. Segments parallel to T670253 along I-8 within the Yuha Basin area are closed.

T670248: segments between T670249 and closed route 040 (north of I-8 and south of Hwy 80) are closed.

T670254: segments between T670249 and T670248 (north of I-8 and south of Hwy 80) are closed.

T670258: portions within the Yuha Basin area are limited to street legal vehicles only except segments designated as historic/discovery trails. Segments that parallel T670274 and T670267 are closed.

T670259: portions within the Yuha Basin area are limited to street legal vehicles only except segments designated as historic/discovery trails which are open.

T670260: portions within the Yuha Basin area are limited to street legal vehicles only. Segments that parallel T670243 and T670264 are closed.

T670264: portions within the Yuha Basin area are limited to street legal vehicles only except segments designated as historic/discovery trails which are open. Segment south of T670344 is closed.

T670267: segments that parallel T67059 are closed.

T670272: portions within the Yuha Basin area are limited to street legal vehicles only except segments designated as historic/discovery trails which are open.

T670274: portions within the Yuha Basin area are limited to street legal vehicles only except segments designated as historic/discovery trails which are open.

T670307: segment between T670306 and T670379 is closed.

T670309: segment between Hwy 98 and T670310 is closed.

T670311: portions within the Yuha Basin area are limited to street legal vehicles only except segments designated as historic/discovery trails which are open.

T670344: portions within the Yuha Basin area are limited to street legal vehicles only.

T670346: portions within the Yuha Basin area are limited to street legal vehicles only except segments designated as historic/discovery trails which are open.

T670352: portions within the Yuha Basin area are limited to street legal vehicles only.

T670353: portions within the Yuha Basin area are limited to street legal vehicles only. The segment between T670304 and T670377 is closed.

T670354: portions within the Yuha Basin area are limited to street legal vehicles only except segments designated as historic/discovery trails which are open. The segment between T670264 and T670353 is closed.

T670359: segments between T670355, T670360 and east of T670357 are closed

T670382: segments that parallel T670318 are closed.

T670393: segments between T670391 and T670396 are closed

T670410: segment that parallels T670358 is closed.

Corrections from the Proposed Plan Amendment:

T670075 was mislabeled as limited for a short portion: all of T670075 is open.

T670084 was mislabeled as limited for a short portion: all of T670084 is open.

T670256 was mislabeled as closed: all of T670256 is open.

T670280 was mislabeled as limited for a short portion: all of T67080 is closed.

T670319 was misidentified as closed. It actually is the same route as route T670387. The route will be identified as T670378 in the future. T670387 will retain the initial designation of limited.

T670345 was mislabeled as open for a short portion: all of T670345 is closed.

T670398 segment was mislabeled: it had the incorrect route number. It should have been identified as T670390, a limited route. All of T670398 is closed.

T670419 was mislabeled as closed. It should be limited.

T670511 the segment south of the All American Canal is closed.

T670519 should not have been designated as open or closed. This route is now entirely on private property. It does not have a BLM designation.

T670538 the segment south of the All American Canal is closed.

Attachment 2

Description of Camping Opportunities

No camping areas	<p>The 1989 camping closure combined with the 2000 camping closure located in East Mesa north of I-8 and west of the Imperial Sand Dunes involving 7,280 acres to reduce impact to the flat tailed horned lizard.</p> <p>The Superstition camping closure adjacent to the Superstition Mountain Open Area north of route T670075 and east of T670201 established in the 1980s due to archeological concerns.</p> <p>Kane Springs Road, T670084 is closed to camping along its entire length due to archeological and pupfish concerns.</p>
Designated camping areas	<p>Camping in the Yuha Basin area is only permitted in designated areas. These areas will be analyzed under a separate environmental document to determine shapes and sizes at the locations indicated on the maps. This is for archeological and flat tailed horned lizard concerns.</p>
Designated parking	<p>Parking during daylight hours is permitted immediately adjacent to routes designated as open or limited in the Yuha Basin area.</p> <p>Overnight parking of unoccupied vehicles at access points to the Jacumba Wilderness Area within the Yuha Basin area will be permitted. This allows parking within 35 feet of the centerline of the following trails T670270, T670273, T670274, T670278, T67028, T670282, T670283 near the access points to the wilderness area. This will allow over night visitors to the wilderness to park at access points. However camping at the access points will not be allowed.</p>
Within a 25' centerline width	<p>All designated routes in the Elliot mine area due to safety and terrain.</p>
Within a 50' centerline width	<p>All flat tailed horned lizard management areas, except Yuha Basin area (see designated camping and parking above).</p>
Within a 300' centerline	<p>All other areas within the project not described above.</p>